

FACILITY



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION VIII

999 18th STREET - SUITE 500
DENVER, COLORADO 80202-2405

Attachment J

FEB 27 1989

Ref: 8HWM-RI

Mr. Gary Baughman
Colorado Department of Health
Hazardous Materials and Waste
Management Division
4210 East 11th Avenue
Denver, CO 80220

Dear Mr. Baughman,

During an inspection of the Rocky Flats Plant on December 6, 1988, facility representatives asked the State of Colorado and EPA to consider the possibility of transferring pond liquids from 207C and 207B ponds to the presently empty pond 207A. The facility asserts that this procedure would allow expedited closure of the remaining ponds as pond 207A has a much greater surface area to volume ratio providing greater evaporation of the pond liquids. The State of Colorado and EPA representatives stated that consideration would be given to this approach but that there might be both HSWA and CHWA implications which might not allow this procedure. Consideration must be given to the hazardous sludges present in the impoundments. The liquids by virtue of the mixture rule (6CCR 1007-3, Section 261.3(a)(2)(iii), 40 CFR 261.3(a)(2)(iii)) may also be hazardous.

As of November 8, 1988, HSWA requires that surface impoundments cannot receive hazardous wastes unless they meet minimum technological requirements (MTRs). The solar ponds do not meet MTRs. Thus, if the solar ponds are considered separate regulated units and the pond liquids are hazardous, then the transfer of liquids from ponds 207B and 207C would be prohibited. The determination of the number of units encompassed by the six (6) solar ponds is the responsibility of the State of Colorado.

After review of the analytical information presented in the solar pond closure plans, it is apparent that the ponds did not contain listed organic solvents above land ban restriction levels when analyzed in 1984, 1985 and 1986. Pond 207B liquids may have contained low levels of methylene chloride and 2-butanone, however these constituents were also found in laboratory blanks, so the presence of these constituents is uncertain. The analyses for the solar ponds indicate that the liquids are not hazardous by characteristic. However, after review of the analyses for the interceptor trench pump house, it is evident that the 207B and 207C ponds have probably received listed solvents recovered from the interceptor trench. Due to the lack of current analyses and the possibility that the pond liquids contain listed hazardous wastes, analyses of the liquids presently in the ponds for HSL

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ADDITIONAL RECORD

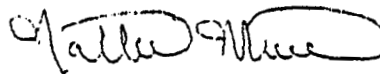
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volatiles should be conducted prior to any determination by the State of Colorado allowing the transfer of pond liquids.

EPA also feels that regardless of the State of Colorado determination regarding the number of regulated units encompassing the solar ponds, it is imprudent to allow the facility to utilize pond 207A for evaporation without installing an impermeable liner in the pond. Asphalt liners utilized by the facility in the past have not proven to be reliable. Presently there is no assurance of how long these liquids will be allowed to remain in the pond(s). Placing these transferred liquids into the leaking 207A pond may displace the plume released from the ponds and cause further migration of the plume. This would not be acceptable in light of the requirements of 40 CFR 265.111 which requires that the owner or operator close the facility in a manner which minimizes the need for further maintenance and minimizes the post-closure escape of hazardous waste and/or leachate. A prudent approach would be to require the facility to place an impermeable HDPE liner in the 207A pond basin prior to transfer. It is EPA's position that the closure of the impoundments should be expedited, but not at the risk of furthering environmental contamination. Therefore, if the transfer of liquids would expedite closure, it should be allowed, but not without installing an impermeable liner in pond 207A.

Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact me at (303) 293-1668, or Martin Hestmark at (303) 293-1506.

Sincerely,



Nathaniel Miullo,
Rocky Flats
Project Coordinator

cc: Lou Johnson, 8HWM-RI
Lorraine Ross, 8RC
Joan Sowinski, CDH
George Dancik, CDH